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Earl Pomeroy
Congress of the United States
North Dakota

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Speaker Nancy Pelosi
H232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill is a terrible tragedy. I support the efforts currently underway to get to the bottom of what went wrong on that oil rig to ensure that a similar disaster is never allowed to happen again. As the House puts together its response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, I strongly encourage you to keep the House's focus on responding to this tragedy and not on placing additional regulations on onshore development, especially on the process known as hydraulic fracturing.

Over the past two years, North Dakota has significantly increased its oil production, rising from the ninth largest oil producing state to the fourth. This increase in production has resulted in a significant state budget surplus and the nation's lowest unemployment rate. During last week's Fourth of July District Work Period I had the pleasure of touring oil field operations in North Dakota. During these visits I saw firsthand the significant safeguards that are put into place to protect groundwater during hydraulic fracturing operations.

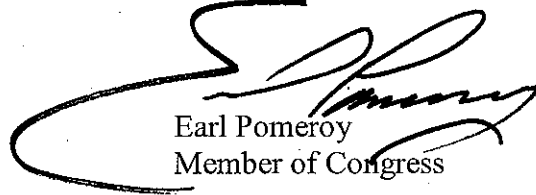
The State of North Dakota currently has strong regulations on oil and gas development that more than adequately protect groundwater. These requirements include strict safety requirements on the storage and disposal of hydraulic fracturing fluid and on encasing the well to avoid leaks. The initial phases of wells are encased in several layers of cement from the surface to below the level of the deepest potable water source and below that level, wells are encased in an additional layer of cement to ensure that groundwater is in no danger of contamination.

It is my belief that regulation of hydraulic fracturing is best left to the states. Regulators in each individual state have a better idea of what steps are necessary to protect their residents and environment. Additionally, they are better equipped to implement commonsense regulations that fit their states unique needs than a catchall Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation.

It is my understanding that there have been discussions about including additional regulations on hydraulic fracturing in upcoming legislation to respond the Gulf oil spill. I believe that this would be a mistake and would find little support in the Senate. The EPA is currently undergoing a congressionally mandated study into hydraulic fracturing that is expected to be completed in 2012. It would be irresponsible for Congress to enact new regulations before the results of that study are known.

Imposing new regulations now will do nothing to protect drinking water and will only serve to slowdown development resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs and increased reliance on imported oil. It is critical that any legislation related to the gulf oil spill focus on responding to that tragedy and not include additional burdens on hydraulic fracturing.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Earl Pomeroy', is written over the printed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'E'.

Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress